

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-15 DPW-01 EUR-25 SAJ-01 DRC-01

/148 W

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R 280510Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7555

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

USSAG NKP THAI

S E C R E T SAIGON 17141

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: MILI VS

SUBJECT: FAREWELL CALL ON PRIME MINISTER KHIEM BY COMUSSAG

GENERAL VOGT

1. CHARGE ACCCOMPANIED GENERAL VOGT WITH MAJOR GENERAL COOKSEY TO PAY FAREWELL CALL ON PRIME MINISTER KHIEM SEPTEMBER 27.

2. PRIME MINISTER OPENED WITH QUESTION ABOUT SITUATION IN CAMBODIA. GENERAL VOGT SAID THAT HE HAD JUST VISITED THERE AND BROUGHT FROM LON NOL MESSAGE URGING COUNTRIES OF SOUTHEAST ASIA TO STAND TOGETHER AGAINST NORTH VIETNAMESE AGGRESSOR WHOSE OBJECTIVES HAD NOT CHANGED. GENERAL VOGT SAID SIMILAR VIEWS WERE ALSO EXPRESSED BY PRIME MINISTER THANOM.

3. GENERAL VOGT REVIEWED GKR SUCCESSES WITH AND WITHOUT US BOMBING SUPPORT. HE SAID ENEMY HAD SUFFERED GREAT LOSSES FROM

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US AIR POWER BECAUSE THEY MASSED TROOPS FOR ATTEMPT TO TAKE

PHNOM PENH BEFORE AUGUST 15 IN ORDER TO HUMILIATE THE US. AT SAME TIME WE HAD BEEN ABLE TO DO SIGNIFICANT DAMAGE TO NVA FORCES AND SUPPLIES AT SOME SIXTY TARGETS ALONG VN FRONTIER. KI WERE NOW RECONSTRUCTING THEIR FORCES AND COULD BE EXPECTED TO TRY AGAIN. GKR HAD GREATLY IMPROVED ITS FORCES AND WOULD AGAIN BE SUCCESSFUL IF THEY WERE ABLE TO MOBILIZE ADEQUATE TROOP STRENGTH IN THE NEXT 60 DAYS. HE SAID THAT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF KHMER KHROM DEMOBILIZED FROM ARVN COULD JOIN CAMBODIAN FORCES. EVEN 1,000 WOULD MAKE A GREAT DIFFERENCE. PRIME MINISTER NOTED THE POSSIBILITY BUT SAID OF COURSE GVN COULD NOT INTERVENE OFFICIALLY AND COULD NOT PAY AND FORCES IN FANK.

4. GENERAL VOGT SAID THAT US AIR FORCES NOW UNDER HIS COMMAND WOULD REMAIN AT PRESENT STRENGTH AS DETERRENT. HE WAS IN CONTINUING COMMUNICATION WITH ARVN JGS AND CORPS COMMANDERS MAINTAINING TARGET INFORMATION TO BE USED IF ORDERED. HE PRAISED ARVN AND ITS POSTURE OF READINESS. HE FELT THAT NVA WOULD CONTINUE BUILD-UP UNTIL IT WAS IN POSITION AT LEAST AS FAVORABLE AS MARCH 1972 AND WOULD KEEP ITS MILITARY OPTION OPEN IN CASE POLITICAL RESULTS WERE UNSATISFACTORY. CONTINUING US CAPABILITY AND ENEMY UNCERTAINTY ABOUT US ULTIMATE INTENTIONS WOULD MAKE THEM THINK TWICE ABOUT MILITARY ACTION.

5. PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT HE THOUGHT THAT IF ENEMY MOVED IT WOULD BE IN AN ATTACK TOWARDS SAIGON. GENERAL VOGT POINTED OUT OUR CONTINUING ACCUMULATION OF INTELLIGENCE BY USE OF DRONES FOR PHOTO RECONNAISSANCE IN THIS AREA. PRIME MINISTER ASKED WHAT WE KNEW ABOUT RESUPPLY OF MILITARY MATERIEL TO HANOI FROM USSR AND CHINA. GENERAL VOGT SAID HIS INTELLIGENCE ON THIS POINT WAS NOT ADEQUATE AND THAT HE INTENDED TO DISCUSS PROBLEM WHEN NEXT IN WASHINGTON. PRIME MINISTER SAID THEY TOO WERE NOT ABLE TO GET GOOD INFORMATION ABOUT SUPPLIES THROUGH HAI PHONG OR EVEN ABOUT CHINESE SHIP WHICH RECENTLY UNLOADED AT DONG HA.

6. PRIME MINISTER ASKED ABOUT INSURGENCY IN THAILAND. GENERAL VOGT NOTED THANOM'S CONTINUING CONCERN ABOUT ITS GROWTH. HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS HAD MADE IT ADVISABLE TO WITHDRAW FROM THAILAND SOME NON-ESSENTIAL USAF ELEMENTS BUT THAT THERE REMAINED A FORCE FULLY ADEQUATE FOR ANY NEED. IT WOULD BE COMMANDED BY A FOUR-STAR GENERAL AND
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MAINTAINED AT ITS PRESENT LEVELS.

7. WITH FORMATION OF NEW LAO GOVERNMENT THERE WOULD BE 60 DAY PERIOD IN WHICH NVA IS SUPPOSED TO WITHDRAW. GENERAL VOGT DOUBTED THEY WOULD IN FACT DO SO AND NOTED THAT THEY WERE MAKING THEIR USUAL SEASONAL SHIFT WHICH WOULD CALL FOR CONTINUING USE OF SUPPLY ROUTES THROUGH LAOS. HE WOULD BE WATCHING CLOSELY.

8. GENERAL VOGT SAID THAT HIS NEW DUTIES WOULD GIVE HIM
RESPONSIBILITY FOR A MUCH LARGER REGION BUT THAT HE REMAINS
PERSONALLY GREATLY CONCERNED ABOUT SECURITY AND SUCCESS IN
VIETNAM AND ASSURED THE PRIME MINISTER OF OUR GOVERNMENT'S
CONTINUING LOYAL SUPPORT. THE PRIME MINISTER EXPRESSED HIS
THANKS AND GOOD WISHES.

9. GENERAL VOGT'S VISIT WAS GREAT TONIC FOR PRIME MINISTER AND
REINFORCED THE CONFIDENCE IN THE US WHICH GVN HAS ALWAYS DRAWN
FROM HIS SKILL AND DEDICATION. THEY, AND WE, ARE GRATIFIED THAT
HE WILL BE IN NEW KEY POSITION IN AREA.

APPLING

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NNN

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